DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 467 690 UD 035 279

TITLE	Symposium on Girls' Education: Evidence, Issues, Actions. Proceedings. (Washington, DC, May 17-18, 2000).
INSTITUTION	Agency for International Development (IDCA), Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Academy for Educational Development, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2000-05-00
NOTE	64p.; Also supported by Development Alternatives, Inc. Produced by the SAGE Project (Strategies for Advancing Girls' Education). For this document in Spanish, French, or Arabic, see UD 035 280-282. Photographs may not reproduce clearly.
CONTRACT	FAO-0100-Q-6006-0
AVAILABLE FROM	Academy for Educational Development, 1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-5721. Tel: 202-884-8000 ; Fax: 202-884-8408; e-mail: sage@aed.org; Web site: http://sage.aed.org.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Access to Education; Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; *Females; Gender Issues; Government Role; Partnerships in Education; Sex Differences; *Womens Education

ABSTRACT

This symposium highlighted core issues of controversy in girls' education and developed implications for policy and practice. Its evidence-based discussion forum encouraged dialogue, debate, and increased interaction and developed partnerships among academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, multilateral development agencies, and other policymaking institutions. The symposium was organized around six thematic panels: "Increasing Girls' Educational Participation and Closing the Gender Gap: Basic Education or Girls' Education?"; "Can We Effectively Balance Efforts to Improve Both Access and Quality?"; "Multisectoral Support for Girls' Education: Help or Hindrance?"; "Educating Girls or Educating Women: Debating the Resource Investment Dilemma"; "Creating Girl-Friendly Schools While Respecting Conventional Practices: Does Innovation Increase the Potential for Local Resistance?"; and "Partners, Adversaries, or Watchdogs: Defining the Relationship between Governments and NGOs in Implementing Girls' Education Programs." Following panel discussions, participants divided into breakout groups to discuss implications for policy and practice. Areas of consensus included the need for a variety of methods to increase community involvement in local schools to generate political will at all levels and the need to increase attention to quality and recognize that universal access to quality basic education is a basic human right. (SM)

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Proceedings

Symposium on Girls' Education

Evidence
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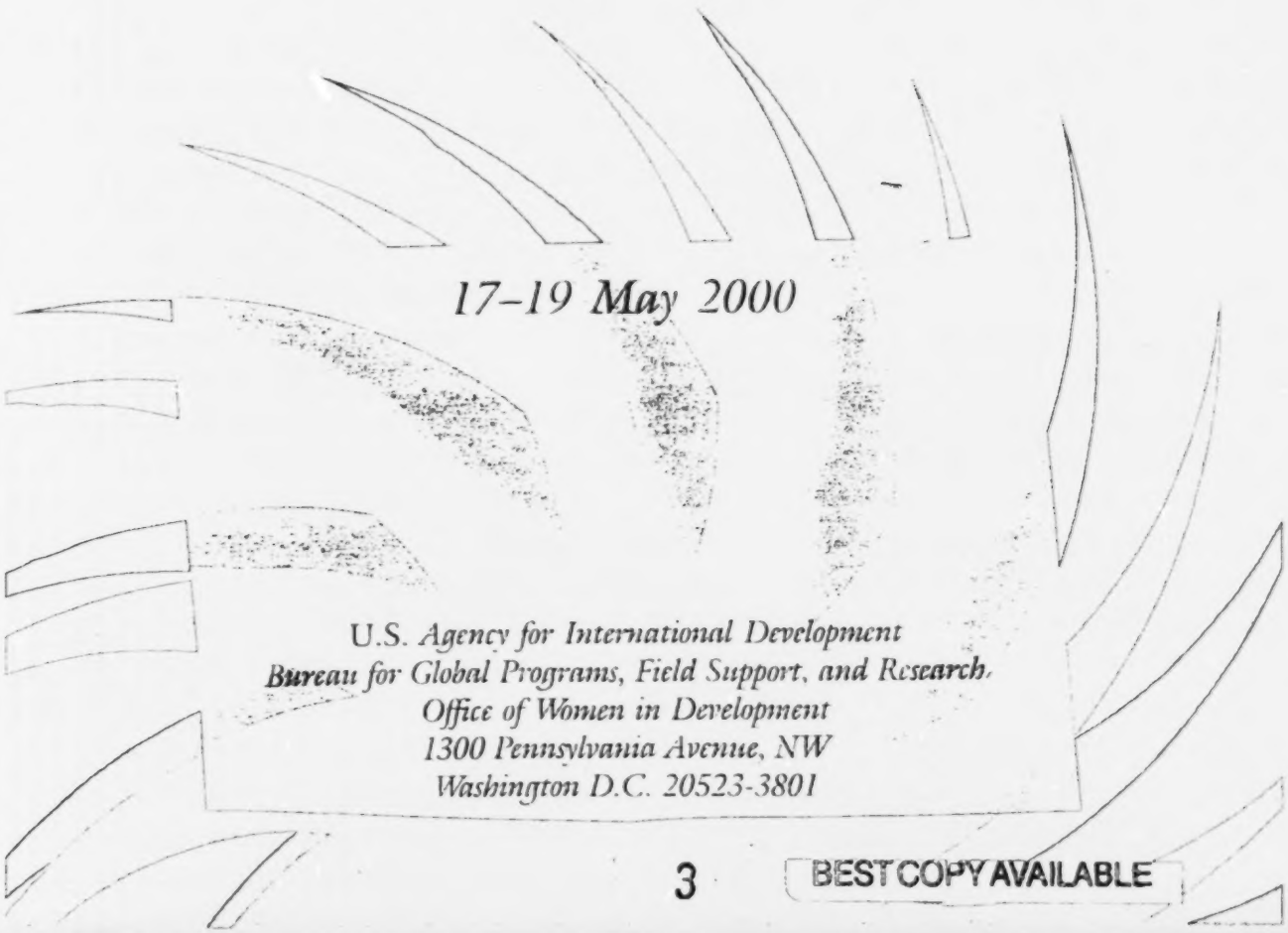

17–19 May 2000

U.S. *Agency for International Development*
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Office of Women in Development
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Although education at all levels yields important benefits, the most pressing educational issue for many developing countries today is basic education—especially for girls.

U.S. President Bill Clinton
World Education Forum, Dakar Senegal, 2000

We need all those with power to change things to come together in an alliance for girls' education: governments, voluntary progressive groups, and above all, local communities, schools, and families.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan
World Education Forum, Dakar Senegal, 2000

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Proceedings of USAID's Symposium on Girls' Education

Background and purpose

As the first step in preparing for the Symposium on Girls' Education, USAID's Office of Women in Development called a meeting of more than fifty practitioners, researchers, consultants, and development officials in Washington, D.C. on December 1, 1999, to discuss issues and experiences related to girls' education worldwide. The Academy for Educational Development's (AED) Strategies for Advancing Girls' Education (SAGE) project organized the Forum on Girls' Education to bring forward new information, evidence, and questions about the effectiveness of current activities to promote girls' educational participation.

USAID and the SAGE project used the information gathered at the forum to commission a series of papers and presentations on key issues and controversies in girls' education. The papers rigorously backed up or questioned the effectiveness of the various policies, strategies, and implementation efforts of the past ten years in girls' education. While some of these papers provided accounts of particular experiences, they remained focused on presenting evidence, data, and data analysis. Moreover, all contained specific recommendations for how policy and practice could be improved for the next generation of activities designed to ensure that girls gain access to and successfully complete basic education. The papers were rigorously reviewed by outside readers and were revised continuously by their authors throughout the months leading up to the symposium.

The Symposium on Girls' Education was held on May 17–18, 2000 at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. The purpose was to continue the dialogue on core topics and issues of controversy in girls' education and to develop implications for policy and practice. To accomplish this purpose, the symposium was designed to promote an evidence-based discussion in a forum that would encourage dialogue and debate and increase interaction and develop partnerships among academic institutions, NGOs, multilateral development agencies, and other policymaking institutions. The symposium was organized around six thematic panels. Panels had four or five presenters, each of whom summarized a paper on a different aspect of the theme or question (such as the relationship between governments and NGOs in implementing girls' and women's basic education programs, and creating girl-friendly schools while respecting conventional practices). Together, the panelists then led discussions of the issues. The length of the presentations was strictly limited to allow panelists and participants ample time to engage in lively, even passionate, debate of the issues and questions that were raised.

Following the panel discussions, participants divided into breakout groups to ponder the implications of the evidence for policy and practice. These sessions, using an innovative discussion format along with flip charts, colored markers, Post-it Notes, and liberal doses of coffee and pastries, encouraged people to devise very specific

recommendations for practices that benefit girls and policies that could enable these practices to occur.

Participants

More than two hundred participants attended the symposium, nearly half of whom were from thirty-two developing countries. The group comprised a broadly representative sampling of policy shapers: practitioners, academics, senior planners, and program managers from the private (NGO, business, and media) and public (government and funding agency) sectors.

Symposium highlights

USAID Administrator J. Brady Anderson

The symposium was opened by USAID Administrator J. Brady Anderson, who said that education is the "very foundation of our children's future success." He noted that such success is particularly needed in developing countries, citing his friend the late President Julius Nyerere's observation that "education is not a way to escape poverty, but a way of fighting it." Anderson made it clear that promoting girls' education is a high priority for USAID, and he took encouragement from signs that the Agency's efforts, along with those of other donors, governments, and the private sector, are helping girls overcome the physical and psychological barriers to education throughout the world.[1] Anderson closed by exhorting participants to make it their goal "to not only give girls the

[1]USAID's policymaking bureau has just released new guidance on Agency basic education programs, and devotes special attention to girls' education. Like many symposium participants, USAID's policy paper calls for the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data to determine the degree of the gender gap as well as the degree to which barriers—or a combination of barriers—to girls' education arise from the demand side (parental and socioeconomic factors) or the supply side (policy and practice that disadvantage girls). Even more emphatically, the policy directive *requires* "that every Mission supporting basic education development verify that available data on educational participation have been analyzed to identify the extent of educational disadvantage facing girls at the primary level, using diagnostic evidence such as the gender gap in primary enrollment rates in relation to girls' overall shortfall from full enrollment." Furthermore, "Mission[s] should seek to identify feasible and cost-effective interventions to reduce or eliminate these barriers, and should strongly consider including such interventions in [their] basic education reform strateg[ies]." USAID, June 27, 2000, "Policy Paper: Program Focus within Basic Education," PPC General Notice 0650, Washington, D.C., p. 17.

ability to read about new worlds, but the ability to look at their own world with new eyes."

U.S. Congressman Earl Pomeroy, Joe Crapa, and Katherine Blakeslee

At a reception for the participants on the first evening, Katherine Blakeslee, director of USAID's Office of Women in Development, thanked the participants, panelists, and symposium organizers. The Symposium, she said, "can have far reaching effects in advancing girls' education throughout the world." Blakeslee said she was struck by several themes that kept recurring throughout the day's presentations. "First, basic education alone often does not reach all children, especially girls in remote areas. Second, a girl-friendly school is a child-friendly school—so the benefits are reaped by both girls and boys in terms of completion rates. Third, we need to shift the meaning of 'access' from access to *structures* (school buildings) to access to *quality* and access to *learning*. Fourth, quality education depends on partnerships. No one actor can define or deliver quality at any one level. Fifth, the benefits of quality education for both girls and boys are multiple and cross-sectoral, and the benefits can be increased through partnerships. And finally, quality education means constructing rather than just transmitting knowledge."

On the second day of the symposium, Congressman Earl Pomeroy (North Dakota) spoke to participants about his strong support of girls' education issues. Pomeroy said that, as a father and as a member of the House International Relations Committee, he is a vocal advocate of universal basic education for girls and supports increased federal funding for these efforts. Pomeroy stated, "I am convinced that providing a basic education for all girls is one of the most important things the United States can do to advance our development policy and improve the lives of women and girls worldwide. I am thrilled to be a part of this symposium."

At the closing plenary, thirty-one participants lined up behind microphones to pledge specific actions they would take as a result of attending the symposium. Some of these commitments were very specific, and included such actions as initiating inter-project exchanges between countries, working with the media to raise the profile of girls' education, and sponsoring a national symposium on girls' education. Some of the work to fulfill these pledges has already begun. For example, the El Salvador delegation's idea to propose the country's First National Congress on Girls' Education in coordination with the Ministry of Education was accepted enthusiastically by the government and USAID's mission; the event is scheduled for November 2000.

Outcomes and next steps

In addition to the thirty-one specific pledges of follow-up work (interspersed throughout this document), participants took advantage of the meeting to build or strengthen their professional and personal relationships, exchange ideas and experiences, and generate excitement and energy needed to carry on the work. In e-mails and letters received after the symposium, participants were effusive in their compliments. Suzanne Grant Lewis (Harvard University) wrote that "the venue choice [the National Museum of Women in the Arts] was particularly inspired! I thought the breakout groups provided a good opportunity for interaction." Also, the executive director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Penina Mlama, wrote that "the meeting [was] very useful and I was glad for the opportunity to share experiences and to network. I wish to express special thanks for making it possible for several FAWE chapters to participate. This contributes a lot to capacity-building of FAWE at the national level."

Another important result was that the plenary, panel, and breakout sessions revealed several areas where almost all participants were in agreement. Some of these areas of consensus included:

- the need for a variety of methods to increase community involvement in local schools as a means to generate the political will at all levels to provide access to quality education for all;
- that government alone does not have adequate resources—human or financial—to ensure access to quality education for all, and that other sectors, including business, media, and religious, must be mobilized to support girls' education;
- the need to increase attention to—even to redefine—quality, and to recognize that universal access to quality basic education is a basic human right;
- the need to collect and analyze gender and geographically-disaggregated data to better determine the extent and nature of the shortfall in full enrollment in national school systems;
- that given resource constraints, the *priority* should be given to girls' education, but programs to provide women with practical, market-oriented basic literacy and numeracy skills are also important; and
- that *girl-friendly* schools are also *child-friendly*, that is, boys also benefit from interventions aimed at improving the quality of classroom learning experience for girls.

Another area of agreement was the need to continue to refine the scholarship on some of the issues participants could only touch upon due to the short time they spent together. Consequently, the SAGE project will work with the authors of papers presented at the symposium to refine their discussions of the themes and questions, taking into account the discussions that took place with participants. These papers will be compiled into a book-length work to be published late in 2000. Readers of these proceedings are invited to send comments on the symposium or these proceedings to the address on the back of this document. This feedback will be evaluated and, when appropriate, incorporated into the publication.

Acknowledgments

Many people and organizations contributed to the resounding success of the Symposium on Girls' Education and to these proceedings. The symposium was sponsored by USAID's Office of Women in Development with the guidance of Susie Clay and the support of Director Katherine Blakeslee and Deputy Director Muneera Salem-Murdock. Planning for the event was undertaken by a committee comprising Susie Clay (USAID); May Rihani, Howard Williams, Karen Tietjen, and Francine Agueh (AED); Lorie Brush (American Institutes for Research); Janet Robb (Creative Associates International, Inc.); Jo Allen Lesser (DevTech Systems); Ray Chesterfield (Juárez and Associates); Mauricio Bertrand (Inter-American Development Bank); and John Hatch (USAID's Center for Human Capacity Development).

In addition to participating on the planning committee, AED organized and implemented the symposium (as a subcontractor to Development Associates International). Special thanks are due to Paula Gubbins, Nora Kruk, Elisabeth Shuba, Sala Ba, and Tyrone McDowell, all of whom worked tirelessly to make sure every detail was planned for.

Panel sessions were moderated by Mauricio Bertrand, Suzanne Grant Lewis, Ash Hartwell, John Hatch, Jo Allen Lesser, and Muneera Salem Murdoch. Breakout sessions were facilitated by Lorie Brush, Ray Chesterfield, Marcia Ellis, Karen Fredrickson, Ash Hartwell, John Hatch, Beverly Jones, Jo Allen Lesser, Eileen Muirragui, Janet Robb, David Sadker, Brian Spicer, Karen Tietjen, Howard Williams, and Malak Zaalouk.

Carolyn Chang, Atema Eclai, John Engels, Daniela Lerda, Leigh-Anne Ingram, M. Elena Patiño, Rachel L. Fix, Serena Leland, and Sobia Nawaz volunteered to take notes at panel, plenary, and breakout sessions, and they drafted much of this document. John Engels, with the assistance of Peggy Kong, also contributed writing, editing, and design work.

Finally, Linda Brown, Alexis Brandt-Covey, Sarah Dastur, Bridget Drury, Alseta Gholston, Deanna Handel, Deborah Hanley, Terri Murray, Donna Smith, Brian Spicer, Ellie Spicer, Kristin Weeks, and Nicole Weepie volunteered to assemble binders, greet travelers, and assist in myriad other ways at the symposium.

1. Increasing Girls' Educational Participation and Closing the Gender Gap: Basic Education or Girls' Education?

There is some debate on whether basic education reform programs or targeted girls' education efforts are the most effective in increasing girls' participation. Proponents of ***basic education*** reform argue that as boys' enrollment approaches universal levels, girls' enrollment will inevitably rise. Not only is basic education reform fundamental to the overall health of the education system, but continued expansion and improvement of primary and secondary education, in general, will benefit all children, including girls. In short, good schooling is girls' schooling. Proponents of ***girls' education*** concede that basic education reform is the ***sine qua non*** of girls' education, but argue that it is not enough simply to get girls into classrooms. Expansion and improvement must be tailored to fit girls' needs, integrate responses to their concerns throughout the education system, and—in some instances—create special programs aimed specifically at girls to address issues unique to them. In short, girls' schooling is good schooling.

In this presentation, the panelists' views were along the spectrum spanning the position that the "dichotomy" between girls' education and basic education is somewhat disingenuous to the position that a girl-friendly school is indeed a child-friendly school.

> FAWE*'s executive committee will advocate for the strengthening and expansion of existing girls' education activities, collect and disseminate success stories, and "take action on the ground to get girls learning!" —Penina Mlama*

Vicky Colbert (*Volvamos a la Gente*/Colombia) argued for a new kind of school to achieve gender equity in education, one based on Colombia's *Escuela Nueva* model. The *Escuela Nueva*, Colbert said, "offers a package of elements that make a school girl-friendly by virtue of the fact that it is child-centered, participatory, and comprehensive." This model integrates tenets of the arguments for both basic and girls' education, and shifts the focus from merely access to the creation of child-centered, multi-age classrooms where children learn in small groups with interactive textbooks. Flexible scheduling and self-learning guides enable girls to miss school during their menstrual cycle or to take care of younger siblings as needed and return to school to pick up where they left off. According to Colbert, the routines and instruments of *Escuela Nueva* "have the potential to promote more symmetrical relationships among all members of the school community."

A 1992 study by the *Instituto Ser* confirmed that students schooled in the *Escuela Nueva* methodology had increased levels of self-esteem compared to students from

more traditional settings. Within the cooperative learning literature, high self-esteem is highly correlated with learning achievement and academic performance. Additionally, cooperative learning and self-esteem are linked in some studies to reduction of prejudice based on race, gender, or physical differences. According to this line of reasoning, a girl-friendly school is a child-friendly school—where the improvement of self-esteem of girls in school is the basis for the empowerment of women or, in Colbert's words, "girls of today, women of the future." Colbert added that the evidence shows that "more of the same is not enough—the improvement of educational quality implies a cultural change." Colbert exhorted participants to "get into the classrooms and get it done. We need radical change to ensure gender equity and it can be done." And if done correctly, she said, both girls *and* boys will benefit from cooperative learning.

USAID/India will share symposium outcomes with colleagues and other stakeholders and will ensure that the BETI foundation will continue its work on girls' education policy.
—Nalin Jena

Gabriela Núñez and Fernando Rubio (Juárez and Associates/Guatemala) elaborated on two other school models innovated in Central America, the Guatemalan *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* and *Eduque a la Niña* programs. *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* presented results that are associated with basic education system improvements that incorporate girls' education interventions. The program targeted traditionally underserved rural children and introduced actions to make teachers and parents aware of gender dynamics and of the importance of providing support for girls. *Eduque a la Niña* was a pilot project that focused on girls' education. Both approaches yielded positive results that supported the effectiveness of girls' education interventions. Núñez and Rubio advocated for approaching girls' education and gender equity as a crosscutting theme in all educational tasks at both the school and the education system levels.

Frank Method (UNESCO) stated that "increasing and improving education opportunities for girls and women is critical to the achievement of the goals of Education for All." To this end, he continued, we need "focused, innovative, and sustained efforts to address gender factors in access to education and to overcome social resistance and disincentives, with increased investments as necessary." Method said that in addition to making these sustained efforts, a supportive policy environment must also be in place to provide the necessary administrative, budgetary, and political commitments to achieve the goals of Education for All. "The commitment must be to the education of all children, not just 'some,' 'most,' or 'as many as feasible.'"

Method supported the position that good schooling *is* girls' schooling." He explained that good schooling does three things well: 1) it establishes a common core of learning objectives to be met by all; 2) it translates learning objectives into oppor-

tunities to learn that include a diversity of approaches and recognize various learning needs; and 3) it sets a public policy, fiscal, administrative, and logistic infrastructure sufficient to pursue the first two consistently over time and for all learners in all communities. Method's "contrarian view," as he put it, is that mere quantitative inclusion of girls is not enough. Too narrow a focus will lead to some level of parity. However, he said, "good schooling needs to be pursued categorically" because it is essential to respect education as a right for all. "Without categorical commitments and high standards for their achievement, advocacy becomes a matter of the politics and public administration of resource allocation." Thus, Method advised on the inclusion of complementary policies 1) to expand new small schools from the bottom-up and 2) to expand early childhood education and women's education programs.

USAID/Ethiopia will make sure that all of its education activities will make a difference in girls' education. —Makeda Tsegaye

Margaret Sutton (Indiana University) postulated that the girls' education versus basic education debate "mirrors the WID [women in development] versus GAD [gender and development] debate from years ago." So far, Sutton said, "educators seem to be stuck on the question of whether support for girls' education should be mainstreamed into basic education programs or...provided in girl-focused programs." The issue revolved then, as it does now, around two questions: 1) whether the focus on girls is detrimental to boys, and 2) whether girl-focused programs have any systemic effect on education systems. According to Sutton, the first issue has been laid to rest by studies done by USAID and others, which show that girl-friendly environments are child-friendly ones. However, Sutton said, "the jury is still out on whether it's important to mainstream or to have a vital center" with respect to girls' educational opportunities. Sutton argued that there is much to be learned from the shift from WID to GAD, where the focus moved from an examination of gender to *gender relations*. This promotes a redefinition of normative gender roles in society and behavior change (as has been seen in the United States with predatory sexual behavior in schools). Finally, Sutton concluded that, while difficult, a greater commitment to the question of gender in education is imperative.

Howard Williams and Margaret Sutton

Daphne Chimuka (FAWE) began her presentation by highlighting some of the major obstacles for girls' participation in Zambia, including long distances to school,

negative traditional beliefs and practices, the impact of HIV/AIDS, and unfriendly school environments. To meet these challenges, Zambia has begun both an "overhaul" of its basic education program and a girls' education project. The girls' education project is now being integrated into the basic education program, leading to two concerns about the future of education reform in Zambia (both of which had just been aptly anticipated by Sutton's presentation). These concerns are: 1) Will girls' education automatically result from basic education? and 2) Is there the financial and human capacity to mainstream girls' education and still maintain the gains made in girls' access? To address these concerns, Chimuka made the following policy recommendations: fee waivers, plans to deal with the effect of the HIV/AIDS crisis on the education system, compulsory universal primary education, incentives for marginalized children, and innovations in teacher education.

Bettina Moll

During the discussion of the presentations, Neera Burra (UNDP/India) suggested that the panelists ought to consider the issue of child labor and its impact on access to education, because "Work in India has shown the importance of looking at the wider universe of children's lives." Likewise, Emily Vargas-Barón (USAID) said that nations in crisis had also not been mentioned by the panelists. Elizabeth King (World Bank) said, "The premise must be education for all, and the key question is what to do to achieve that policy....If we look at aggregated income data, you will see that targeting girls is the only way to get basic education for all. Attention to girls' education is a lightning rod for all education problems—if we get the girls to school, the boys will follow."

Guatemala will work to increase global awareness and build global solidarity on the importance of girls' education.
—Rita Roesch de Leiva

In the breakout sessions for this panel, there were many suggestions for both policies and practices to increase girls' educational participation. These followed up on many of the ideas that surfaced in the plenary session.

Many participants and panelists presented important policy implications that they felt needed to be addressed by policymakers and funding organizations. For example, ministries of education should incorporate gender training into preservice and inservice training. Donors should require and enforce implementation of gender

analysis and planning in educational programs. Local authorities should be responsible for reporting why girls are not in their schools. Schools and communities should formulate and enforce sexual harassment policies, and fire teachers and administrators (and expel students) who violate these policies. Governments should formulate economic policies that create more employment opportunities, especially in rural areas. These opportunities will serve as incentives for families to send children—all their children—to school, thereby increasing demand for schooling.

Both panelists and participants agreed that basic education reforms need to be responsive to girls' specific educational needs through a process of transformation of the whole education system. There is a need to focus on all children, girls and boys. Others recommended focusing on early childhood development, which—because the raising of infants and very young children is primarily a family and parental responsibility—might be a cheaper alternative and a more sustainable investment in the end, as investments at this level might reduce expenditures further along.

Others suggested acquiring a deeper understanding of "pluricultural realities," that is, local culture and conditions. This understanding, they suggested, would require not only engaging local stakeholders in ongoing dialogue and consultation, but undertaking both qualitative and quantitative research as well. Attention should be given to gender relations and roles (along with access, quality, and other traditionally studied issues). Furthermore, to be most useful, the data should be disaggregated by gender, income, ethnicity, and geographic location. This level of detail and analysis will be of great value to researchers, policymakers, and local actors seeking to understand the root causes of particularly tenacious pockets of underachievement.

Karin Hyde

Some participants noted that the lines between policy and practice are not easy to draw, because institutional structures and processes truly determine policy and practice. Thus, one group suggested that the recommendations be called "practical issues" rather than "practices."

In general, while there were some differences on how to best achieve education for all, it was generally agreed that, in Karen Hyde's (Latilewa Consulting) words, "good schools are good for both boys and girls." Furthermore, providing good schools, as Method pointed out, requires "political will, funding, advocacy, and a respect for basic human rights." Finally, one might add to this mixture of characteristics of and requirements for good schools, as Sutton suggested, a reexamination and refinement of our current understanding of gender roles.

2. Can We Effectively Balance Efforts to Improve Both Access and Quality?

In the 1980s and 1990s, many educational systems were restructured, either to expand or improve services. These efforts have led to increased enrollment of boys and girls in schools, and have led to improvements in teacher training and curriculum development. However, despite increased girls' enrollment rates, the gap between girls and boys has not diminished. According to the 1998 *Report on Progress Towards World Population Stabilization*, girls' enrollment rates between 1985 and 1995 increased in twenty-nine countries and decreased in seventeen countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East.[2] Two of the critical challenges education systems face are increasing access to achieve equity and education for all and providing a quality education for all. The goal is to deliver basic education that offers useful and relevant learning for all and to ensure that all girls not only enroll in but also complete the primary school cycle.

Our NGO in Malawi will improve its networking and will work as a team to promote girls' education. —Earnest Pemba

There are two main schools of thought regarding the improvement of quality in educational programs. The first asserts that the first generation of basic education programs mainly focused on ensuring increased access to schools for both girls and boys. Quality issues were addressed as a second-tier priority behind the expansion of access. The second generation of educational programs should, according to proponents of this school of thought, focus on fundamental quality issues in two ways: first, they will increase demand for schooling as parents are convinced of the utility of a quality education; and second, they will increase the supply of school places as improved quality enhances the efficiency of the education system (that is, as fewer students repeat grades, more school places are available to new students). The second main school of thought focuses on the disparity that still remains between girls and boys, arguing that donors and governments need to allocate resources strategically and design programs that focus directly on providing access to every last girl that has been left out of school. This second school of thought claims that expansion of access should remain the primary focus, not only because of limited financial resources, but also because there is evidence that the positive effect of girls' education on indicators of social and economic development is not dependent on the quality of education. The question still remains how best to support girls' education, that is, how can limited resources be invested to both improve quality and increase access to education for girls?

[2]Data from Population Action International, 1998.

> UNICEF *will assist every country it can to enable girls to obtain a quality basic education.*
> *—Mary Joy Pigozzi*

Zahid Afridi (Netherland's Girls' Education Program/Pakistan), proposed that access and quality cannot be perfectly balanced. Afridi summarized the dramatic success of Balochistan's Primary Education Program in increasing girls' access from only 20 percent in 1990 to 45 percent in 1999. Using the "community support process," the program supported local NGOs and field-based offices to establish a "community support process," building parents' and communities' capacity to create and manage their own schools. In those ten years, girls' enrollments increased from eighty thousand to two hundred thirty-three thousand.[3] Afridi wondered, however, whether quality could ever be maintained during such rapid expansion. While the government always had the aim of improving access along with quality, the Balochistan project showed how difficult that goal is to achieve. For example, because parents and communities traditionally had little or no role in their children's education in Balochistan, developing the high level of community involvement required to achieve sustainable quality objectives required effort and influence over longer time periods as well as continuous monitoring and support of parents and NGOs.

Panelist Andrea Rugh (independent consultant) maintained that access and quality are interdependent, that is, they determine "the ability to enter and continue in school without barriers." Rugh said that it is imperative to address issues of quality in educational programs. Poor quality programs may not attract the remaining out-of-school girls or sustain their participation if the private returns to education do not become more apparent to them and to their parents.

Mary Joy Pigozzi

Rugh pointed out that while "girls encounter many barriers to gaining access to a quality education, physical, psychological, and institutional," investments in access lead to high social returns. Rugh noted that it is widely accepted that the greatest returns are to primary education, and that returns to education are highest for the lowest income countries. However, these indicators improve regardless of the curricular objectives, whether for basic literacy and numeracy or for skill development. Rugh drew participants' attention to data that show that even when quality is poor access

[3]Data from BEMIS, April 1999 (includes the primary sections of middle and high schools).

alone still pays high social and economic benefits. She also stated that we must look beyond personal and social benefits and see that improving quality can also permit greater expansion of access.

The more important issue, Rugh suggested, is that parents send their children to school to reap private, not only social, returns. Thus, if quality is low, parents may decide the family is better off keeping their children home. If quality were improved to the point where students could gain real skills, however, the prospect of such individual returns could motivate parents and communities to remove barriers to access and completion.

Rugh reminded the audience that when resources are limited and school-age populations are growing, it becomes critical to focus on what is critical in education programs. Rugh recommended that school systems refocus their efforts to improve quality on "self-evident, tested, and interconnected components" that combine access and quality, emphasizing the flexible delivery of programs that are relevant to students' backgrounds and environment. Rugh also recommended addressing the question of girls' access through improvements in program quality and design.

Francine Agueh (Academy for Educational Development) agreed with Rugh that access and quality are inseparable concepts. Agueh said that the "first generation" of girls' education interventions focused on access only, but that the effects were undermined by the lack of attention to quality. Even with improved access there was no real improvement in girls' completion rates. The second generation of programs focused on quality and improved completion rates for boys and girls. However, these interventions had no effect on girls' enrollment rates. Thus, it is clear, Agueh asserted, that access and quality are inextricably linked: "we can't talk about one without the other." Agueh proposed that the methodology of the next generation of programs take this into account, defining the country context and assessing current access and quality levels. Actions should be taken to define quality and access norms and efforts to achieve those norms. Agueh said that the interventions should be based on the development of sound plans to reach both quality and access objectives. Moreover, the plans should take into account the country context—including costs—and should also include implementation and monitoring systems for each objective.

USAID/Guatemala will sponsor a literacy symposium, support gender-based social marketing programs, and assist the ministry to complete its education-for-all plan. —Wende DuFlon

Mary Joy Pigozzi (UNICEF) extended Rugh's and Agueh's arguments to their logical conclusions, saying that "quality without access is impossible, but access without quality is meaningless." Pigozzi said that access and quality should be redefined and that her organization has already begun to do so with its "rights-based approach,"

whose premise is that curricula must be relevant to students' lives, founded on respect for human rights and gender-equality, respect for diversity, and include life-skills training that can make a long-term difference in girls' lives.

There are "enormous challenges and immense opportunities" in addressing these issues, Pigozzi said. For example, many so-called child-centered curricula will have to be updated or redefined to remove male biases and include girls. Teachers will have to be retrained to call on girls more and give them more feedback.

Pigozzi said that with universal access to school, the broad understanding develops that education is a human right. An incremental approach that expands access while redefining learning outcomes and reconceptualizing the meaning of quality makes sense, she added. Because "girls and families vote with their feet," Pigozzi said that local context must be understood, and this understanding used to create schools that are affordable and welcoming to girls and to develop teachers who are able to teach. These school and community-based mechanisms ensure higher quality, or *support*, for learners. As another participant stated, "girls need support to stay in school, not just to go to school." Acknowledging Afridi's doubt about the practicality of balancing access and quality, Pigozzi said that while expanding access along with quality is time-consuming and difficult, "the alternative is even less desirable."

In the breakout sessions, participants provided numerous examples of quality improvements that had been achieved in various countries, though as was stated again and again, "it is difficult to balance quality and access in the school context." Still, all of the breakout groups appeared to agree with Pigozzi and Rugh's assertion that girls not only need to go to school, but require support to stay in school. This support could take various forms, such as:

- gender-sensitive training for community leaders, teachers, and parents;
- relevant (and culturally appropriate) curricula and teaching materials;
- safe, clean schools that meet the physical needs of girls; and
- community and parental involvement.

Uganda will share experience and knowledge gained at the symposium and will launch a national program on girl's education in June 2000.
—Marcy Rwendaire

Such support also implies the need for policies and programs that encourage the decentralization of responsibility and authority (and the concomitant accountability) to districts, school administrators, and communities.

Some specific recommendations included conducting regular assessments of quality and access in each country and setting access and quality targets. These assessments and targets could diminish the possibility of repeating the problems experienced in Balochistan, where access was dramatically increased without enough consideration given to quality issues. On the

other hand, in emerging democracies such as South Africa, this balancing act may be problematic, as there is sometimes an overwhelming political demand from historically excluded groups to gain immediate access to services.

Haiyan Hua and Ruth Kavuma

Steven Klees (University of Maryland) responded to these dilemmas with the comment that "I don't see any point in talking about access to education without talking about access to quality education." Pigozzi answered that the definition of quality may have to be reconsidered along the lines of her presentation: quality means healthy learners, relevant content, child-centered classrooms, safe learning environments, and clear learning objectives. Such quality enhancements, while difficult to achieve, will lead to access gains, she said. Mona Habib (American Institutes for Research) suggested that participants think of "access as the opportunity to learn, that is, you open a school to go learn, to seek learning." Agueh added that definitions of access and quality should be country-specific.

In other breakout sessions, participants expressed the need to create an effective communication system among stakeholders. This system would develop a "synergy" among parents, government, NGOs, and civil society to effectively define access and quality, especially when there are competing (or conflicting) interests. Indeed, community involvement, it was clear, has to be incorporated into the definition of quality, along with the corollary that communities themselves are central to defining quality for their own schools. One participant suggested "creating practical tools and methods to assess quality and motivate communities to achieve it." Kristi Fair (Macro International) remarked that there is sometimes a conflict between communities' perceptions of quality, which may mean safety or relevance of curriculum, and those of "experts," which may mean student-teacher ratios and teacher qualifications.

USAID/Egypt will share the outcomes of the symposium and work to develop appropriate measurable indicators for girls' education. —Aziza Helmy

Finally, seconding Agueh's call for indicators to monitor progress and impact of interventions and policies, Haiyan Hua (Harvard University) said that redefining educational quality has huge implications for policy, particularly in the area of mobilizing resources for all aspects of education. "Have we done the careful and practical projections of what a new quality initiative means and requires?" he asked.

3. Multisectoral Support for Girls' Education: Help or Hindrance?

Significant reductions in the gap between girls' and boys' enrollments have been made in many developing countries during the past decade. However, many of these gains could be lost if—as is almost certain—government education expenditures do not keep pace with the growing school-age populations. Clearly, government cannot remain the sole education services provider; other sectors, such as the media, religious, and business, are increasingly being called into the educational arena to provide complementary services and influence public opinion. Involving the private sector in girls' education has opened up new possibilities such as the flexible and fast acquisition of resources. However, these new possibilities may come at a price. Will education services be provided equitably? Will private services work in harmony with the government? Who will ensure that there is a long-term commitment to girls' education?

Though the title of this panel discussion raised the question of the value of multisectoral support for girls' education, the presentations on experiences in Morocco, Guinea, Guatemala, and Malawi all indicated that such support had clear benefits. Some of the themes that emerged in the presentations were: the basic importance of public-private partnerships (though their natures might vary), the barriers to establishing and maximizing the participation of nontraditional sectors, and the necessity for constituency building and local ownership. However, it is important to note that the approaches to involving civil society differed in each context.

Eileen Muirragui (Management Systems International) began her presentation by answering the question raised by the panel title, "The question is not *whether* public-private partnerships are a help or hindrance; rather, it is a question of *how* to make them work." Muirragui and her colleague Najat Yamouri (Management Systems International) provided the example of Morocco's Girls' Education Activity (GEA), part of the larger USAID Global Bureau's Girls' and Women's Education Activity (GWE), which supports a multisectoral approach to promoting girls' education. Based on their experience, the key factors to success were a policy environment that encourages intersectoral partnerships, strong leadership and vision in all involved sectors, concrete action plans, and local ownership of and commitment to the projects.

USAID/Benin will help write a law to address the abuse of girls in school. —Michele Akpo

In presenting the girls' education experiences in Guinea, Pierre Kamano (Ministry of Education) stressed that multisectoral support is especially important where funding is low, economic conditions are poor, but traditional forms of organization remain strong. According to Kamano, identifying, implementing, and coordinating the work of the various stakeholders requires a "shared vision of who is doing what within a strategy arrived at by consensus." The Guinean experience demonstrates the importance of

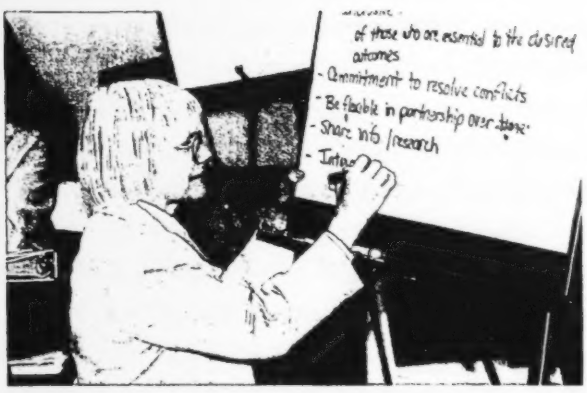
working with traditional organizations (in this case religious leaders, community elders, and hometown associations) and parents' associations, which were the chief mechanisms for coordinating the relationship between school and community. In Guinea, a national forum held in 1999 provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share their ideas and experiences and arrive at the necessary consensus on how best to approach the national education objectives that had been set. The role of the community and the private sector, along with the progress made by the national forum, clearly demonstrate that government is no longer the sole provider of education and that communication is vital among stakeholders. The importance of formal mechanisms for information sharing and for a watchdog committee to ensure that all actors fulfill their roles and responsibilities (without going beyond them) were emphasized as key to successful multisectoral involvement.

Morocco will broaden its definition of quality and seek help from communities and the private sector in its programs. —Zeinab Alaoui

The presentation on multisectoral support for girls' education in Guatemala by María Angela Leal (World Learning) raised questions and proposed approaches for situations in which the support is insufficient to meet the needs of all communities. She noted that the gains made through "institutional synergies" are counterbalanced by the dissipation of grassroots-level efforts that do not reach some populations where problems are most acute. Mayan women, for example, face triple discrimination as poor, uneducated females of a subordinate, indigenous minority. The successes of current strategic partnerships between business and government do not serve their needs, because they fail to cultivate an alliance between the authorities and constituencies of indigenous groups; do not take full advantage of municipal organizations, local NGOs, religious groups, and traditional leaders; and fail to work in the various Mayan languages. Policy implications Leal identified included the creation of national level partnerships that include smaller, local organizations at all levels of civil society; the use of appropriate languages; and the provision of teachers with appropriate tools for the classroom and for working with parents and communities.

Emmanuel Acquaye and Joshua Muskin

Earnest Pemba (CRECCOM), who presented the experiences of his NGO in Malawi, argued that considering the nature of the various constraints on girls' educa-


of those who are essential to the desired
outcomes
- Commitment to resolve conflicts
- Be flexible in partnership over time
- Share info / research

Lorie Brush

tion, multisectoral support has been essential in efforts to address the issues. Pemba illustrated how government, religious leaders, politicians, the media, the private sector, and donors are each uniquely suited to addressing different aspects of the limitations on girls' education that arise from cultural, physical, and socioeconomic constraints. Pemba did, however, identify problems with a multisectoral approach: the possibility of duplication of effort due to lack of coordination, the threat to central authority presented by extra-governmental education initiatives, the risk of grassroots organizations supplanting government responsibility, the possible backlash on the part of boys who may perceive themselves as disadvantaged, and the possibility that the promotion of girls' education may call into question some traditional cultural values. Pemba recommended that education stakeholders engage in ongoing consultation and coordination across sectors at all levels; flexibility in implementation; formative evaluation to ensure sustainability; community empowerment, transparency and good governance; and a full understanding within communities of the entire policy formulation and implementation process.

During the question and answer period, Atema Eclai (Harvard University) described her own experience of attending a similar symposium when she was a girl of seventeen, and wondered why there were no girls present at this one, especially since the discussion was about so-called stakeholders. A viewpoint in opposition to the panelists' was offered by Steven Klees (Univerity of Maryland) who returned to the question asked in the title of the panel, of whether such an approach is indeed the best way to support girls' education. Klees claimed that multisectoral participation delegitimizes government, is unsustainable, and cannot reconcile the conflicting views of the problems among stakeholders. He asserted that these were reasons for rejecting the multisectoral approach.

In Guinea, using the multisectoral approach, we will encourage more business sector involvement in building school infrastructure. —Ibrahima Ba

Some of the implications for policy and practice raised in the breakout sessions included ensuring the participation of communities during all phases of education reform, the need for multisectoral activities to conform to or complement the government's agenda, and the need to establish a system for monitoring and evaluat-

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ing efforts. One participant called for the creation of an office in the ministry of education devoted solely to developing and coordinating such efforts and creating an environment in which all voices can be heard. Another common theme was the importance of identifying all stakeholders to ensure that the approach was truly inclusive, and clarifying the expectations and roles of each participating actor.

The National Council on Childhood and Motherhood, Egypt will reassess its program objectives in light of the new, rights-based definition of quality that emerged at the symposium and expand links to the health sector, NGOs, and community schools projects.
—Hoda el-Saady

Good communication and coordination at the national, regional, and local levels among NGOs, the private sector, communities, and government were also cited as key to successful support for girls' education. It was suggested that Internet sites for the collection and exchange of information on girls' education be established nationally and internationally, perhaps by NGOs. In addition, Web sites established and run by and for girls could provide another means of communication and information-sharing. And finally, since girls are future leaders, they should be given the opportunity to attend meetings and conferences such as this one.

Finally, questions were raised on how to sustain private sector support, what are the roles of multinational corporations and the media, and whether and how international donor agencies should be involved. There were varying opinions concerning whether private sector support for girls' education could be sustained, given the short-term and particular interests of private enterprises. Others questioned whether multisectoral partnerships work, noting that if they did they would probably have been adopted in many more countries by now. Still others maintained that multisectoral support for girls' education could and should be sustained, but the design and implementation of their programs must be improved. There was also a call for a literature review and possibly more research on multisectoral support for girls' education. Such research could help determine which partnerships are more likely to succeed and achieve sustainability.[4]

[4]The SAGE project is completing such research entitled *Multisectoral Support of Girls' Education: Overview of Business, Religious, and Media Sectors: Activities and Intervention*. The study will be published in late 2000.

4. Educating Girls or Educating Women: Debating the Resource Investment Dilemma

Despite recent improvements in the status of girls' education, a large disparity persists between girls' and boys' access to education. For example, in 1991, seventy-seven million girls age 6–11, but only fifty-two million boys, were out of school worldwide.[5] Between 1970 and 1985, the number of women unable to read rose by fifty-four million while that of men increased by only four million. Thus, the growth in illiteracy was more than thirteen times greater for women than for men.[6] While there is an obvious need to increase educational opportunities for girls and women, in a world of diminishing resources there are differing opinions regarding the allocation of resources and whether the focus should be solely on girls' education or if there should also be an emphasis on providing educational opportunities for women.

FONHEP will diagnose the situation in Haiti, redefine quality, conduct strategic planning, and expand its linkages to other organizations. —Vanya Berrouet

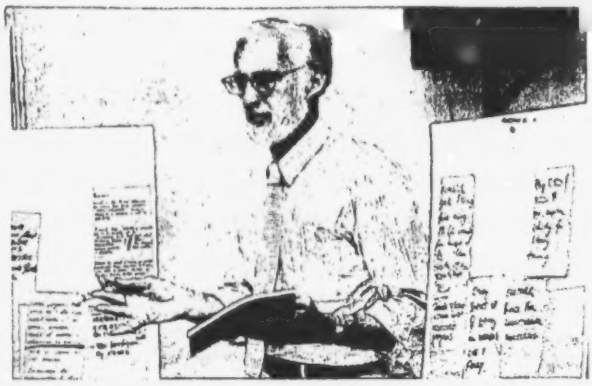
Susie Clay, Atema Eclai, and Sue Klein

Barbara Herz (U.S. Department of Treasury), in her panel presentation, supported the need for emphasizing girls' education. Herz focused on an argument first made by former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Laurence Summers that "the economic and social returns from girls' education may well be the highest for any development effort." Herz furthered the argument for the emphasis on girls by highlighting four main points. First, "unless we educate girls now, we will always face the choice of 'educating girls or educating women.'" Second, by reaching girls and women at younger ages, "the economic and social stream of benefits are longer, and governments can more easily reach individuals when they are younger." Third, since huge expenditures on education for children are being and will continue to be made, why not make sure girls can participate? Finally, during the

[5]World Bank, *Priorities and Strategies for Education*, Washington D.C., 1995.

[6]UN Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (UNDIESA), *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics 1970–1990*, New York, 1991.

process of bringing more girls into school, the question of how older girls or women can get a "second chance" at education will inevitably be raised.



John Hatch

Herz acknowledged that there are many obstacles to girls' education, including poverty, poor and unsafe school facilities, parental objections, and sometimes social norms. Additionally, schools still often create environments hostile to girls, posing major obstacles to their ability to learn and to complete school. Herz said that schooling for girls appears to many parents as having a high opportunity cost, that is, they believe schooling serves neither their own nor their children's immediate needs—even if they understand that education has clear benefits to society over the long term.

While Herz believes that "we know how high the returns to girls' education are," she said that little research has been conducted on the benefits of educating adult women. And while it might appear reasonable to expect similar returns to educating adult women, Herz noted that girls "benefit at a younger age, before their earning years, and before they marry and have children." Nevertheless, Herz suggested that there still remains a need to conduct research that can document the benefits of educating adult women.

Laura Raney's (World Bank Institute) presentation was summarized in her absence by her colleague Elisa DeSantis (World Bank Institute). Raney, like Herz, asserted that girls' education is "*the* critical investment to reducing poverty," that "the future of generations of women rests squarely on girls' education," and that "it is crucial to get girls in school and to keep them there." Raney underlined Herz's statement that political commitment and community partnerships are necessary for sustained and successful girls' education programs: "strong political will is necessary, as well as extended and expanded partnerships and resource mobilization."

We will share our experience of the symposium with our colleagues in Ethiopia and infuse gender education issues into all of our activities.
—Maekelech Gidey

Raney listed some of the specific economic and social benefits of educating girls that Herz had alluded to, which include increased earning potential of families and households and lower fertility and child mortality rates. She said that "educating girls enhances both their productivity and earning potential, contributing to better economic performance and poverty alleviation." Moreover,

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she said, educating girls tends to produce more women who continue on after primary school, marry later, and have smaller and healthier families. Additionally, the benefits to girls' education "are multiple and substantial in terms of lower fertility rates, lower infant and child mortality rates, and lower maternal mortality rates." Therefore, "in view of scarce resources, investments in girls' education" should be a priority, not just in the education sector, but as part of "the global and national development agenda."

In Peru, we will share news from the symposium with other members of the private sector and encourage the sector to support education for all and to put girls' education "on the agenda." —Roque Benavides

Sharon Franz (Academy for Educational Development) took issue with the position of some girls' education advocates that "culture" can be a permanent obstacle to some girls' education. On the contrary, Franz said that "while culture *seems* a most intractable factor to change, nevertheless it does change all the time." Using the case of the United States and the development of girls' physical education programs in universities, Franz illustrated the dramatic impact of legislation and education on culture and the roles of men and women in society. She traced the history of the narrowing of the gender gap in American physical education and intercollegiate sports programs, which "reinforc[ed] the rights of individuals to challenge inequalities" and ultimately changed the normative values of American culture.

Countering Herz and Raney's arguments that girls' education should remain a priority (and not only when placed in opposition to the education of women), Shirley Burchfield (World Education) argued for an approach that focuses on both girls' and women's education. She believes that funding both girls' and women's education is critical to a country's development. Burchfield pointed out that investing in women is a cost-effective strategy for improving a country's overall social and economic development that will ultimately lead to increased enrollment for children, particularly girls. She said that a "holistic approach that provides education for both girls *and* women is more likely to yield a higher return from investments in girls' education than a strategy that focuses solely on girls' schooling."

Emmanuel Acquaye, Wende DuFlon, Ange N'Koue, Earnest Pemba, and Michele Akpo

The rationale behind Burchfield's approach has four main factors: 1) a strong relationship exists between

the mother's education and that of her children; 2) there is a high correlation between the mother's education level and the health of her family; 3) the number of female-headed households is increasing, and women tend to spend income earnings on the family's welfare; and adult education programs have a large impact on the lives of participating adolescent girls at a critical juncture when they are making decisions about marriage and childbearing. In support of this rationale and approach, Burchfield cited a variety of studies that point out the critical role that mothers play in their daughter's education.

Additionally, Burchfield argued that combining adult education and literacy programs with basic formal education for girls provides mutual support for both girls and women and ultimately "yields a higher result than girls' education alone." Burchfield recommended an integrated strategy that includes education for both girls and women, that closely links existing adult education programs to the formal education system, and that expands other programs that solely focus on girls' education to address the needs of mothers. Burchfield believes that the reasons for investing in both girls' and women's education goes beyond health and family issues—education also allows women and girls to be more aware of their legal rights and enhances their involvement in community participation and decisionmaking. Burchfield concluded that such a dual approach will produce benefits in social and economic development, health, decisionmaking, political participation, and income-generation.

Guatemala will assess the status of and share with colleagues the country's education-for-all plan for the years 2000–2004, girls' education in indigenous areas, the multisectoral approach, and girls' literacy. —Vice Minister of Education Bayardo Mejía

In the breakout sessions, participants discussed the implications of the panel discussion for policy and practice, such as a general reform of the formal school system and learning environment to make them more girl-friendly and the need for additional literacy programs. While there was widespread agreement that there should be a strong emphasis on educating girls, there was still much debate on whether resources should be focused solely on girls, or whether programs that integrate the needs of

John Engels, Mona Habib, and Brian Spicer

World Education will support the NFC council to make sure that countries' education-for-all plans emphasize girls and boys, and will conduct longitudinal research on women's education issues.
—Chij Shresthe

girls and women should also be supported. Some participants expressed frustration at having to choose, saying that not only was it a "false dichotomy," but that the difference between girls and women is hard to determine in many cases. Haiyan Hua (Harvard University) said that education is a basic human right and that education should be a lifelong process rather than a one-time opportunity that women and teenagers simply miss out on if they do not receive education when they are children. Nevertheless, almost everyone—when pressed to consider resource constraints—agreed that until countries attain universal primary education, the priority must be on girls. Neera Burra (UNDP/India) said that unless schools address the issue of quality, they will simply reinforce, rather than eliminate, gender bias and sexual discrimination. Some participants pointed out the need to include girls' and women's voices in policy formation, allowing their direct contribution to add to the debate. In addition, many cited the need for a "paradigm shift" in how schools are viewed by communities. Chris Wheeler (Michigan State University) suggested that schools be transformed into community resource and learning centers, which would, he said "increase parental involvement in schools and make schools more responsive to the community."

Panelists and participants cited the need to "make the case for girls' education" to governments and donors to ensure that the commitment was sustained over time. Panelists and participants agreed that there is a need for governments to continue increasing the resources they devote to their education budgets, and within education, the proportion devoted to equitable basic education. They also said that "educating girls requires government leadership and financing...***and*** also requires more involvement of parents and communities to ensure that schools educate in ways that people find valuable." There were also calls for improving the quality of the school environment, that is, to make schools more "girl-friendly."

In the breakout sessions, participants who were arguing for the need to increase gender equity cited many social benefits including later

The Dominican Republic will support a program on nonviolence in families and girls' rights, multigrade schools for girls, and the incorporation of sex education into school curricula.
—Cecilia Bérges

marriage and delayed first pregnancy, fewer and healthier children, and better educated and wealthier families.

USAID/El Salvador will sponsor, with the Ministry of Education, the country's first national congress on girls' education and will support the process—also at the ministerial level—of creating a new national education strategy.
—Mercedes Castillo

There were suggestions that more research be commissioned on women's education programs, including those that promote basic literacy, and practical, market-oriented skills. Mona Habib (American Institutes for Research) and Brian Spicer (Academy for Educational Development) agreed that adult education is necessary, but cautioned that adult education programs should not "undermine" basic education programs. For example, Habib suggested that "factories could educate their workforces without drawing on basic education budgets for adult education." She added that "women should have other programs, such as skills training for small business and numeracy," adding that "they often resent sitting with young girls learning how to read books that are not relevant to the demands of their daily lives." Spicer agreed that adult education should focus on "informal market skills training."

Haiyan Hua

Finally, there was a call for practices that would lead to increased community and parental involvement in education. To make skills more transferable to local needs, Wheeler suggested linking communities with schools in order to "prepare kids to make a living from the informal sector." This approach, he added, would take advantage of existing knowledge and invite parental involvement.

In conclusion, while participants saw the bifurcation between girls' and women's education as somewhat artificial (agreeing on the need for education to address both girls' and women's needs), in the face of resource and institutional constraints faced by governments and public and private donors, they recognized the need to remain focused on programs to improve the chances for girls to enroll in and complete basic education.

5. Creating Girl-Friendly Schools While Respecting Conventional Practices: Does Innovation Increase the Potential for Local Resistance?

As a result of the growing awareness of gender inequities in primary and secondary schools, there has been an increase in political and program support for the creation of "girl-friendly" schools. Some argue that quality education, gender-sensitive pedagogy, and teacher training in conjunction with community participation are critical components of girl-friendly schools. These innovations contribute to creating girl-friendly environments that allow girls to obtain quality education. However, agreement on the criteria for a girl-friendly school has been difficult to achieve. As the four presentations in this panel showed, creating a girl-friendly environment often requires overcoming local resistance, especially when the changes appear to be contrary to conventional practices.

> *Egypt will consolidate the relationships established at the symposium by visits between Moroccan and Egyptian girls' education community participation projects.*
> *—Malak Zaalouk*

Malak Zaalouk (UNICEF/Egypt) asserted that improving the quality of education for girls enhances their academic performance and leads to greater community participation and support of the educational reform process. From her experience with the Community Schools of Egypt project, she believes it is possible to introduce innovative educational practices and quality education for girls without arousing local resistance. At the heart of her discussion was the issue of educational quality and how girl-friendly strategies lead to lifelong learning. She argued, "quality, innovative education is the pathway to gender equity....Improving the quality of education gets girls in school and keeps girls in school."

Zaalouk said there must be a new approach in education that emphasizes learner participation, self-sufficiency, and empowerment. Teachers must create child-centered classrooms where students are actively engaged and can develop strong self-esteem. Learning objectives should go beyond traditional competencies and include teamwork, communication skills, creativity, and emotional literacy. Zaalouk believes that an innovative, quality education model also requires changes in teacher's use of time, sources of curriculum and instruction, teacher's approach to assessment, discipline policies, and school management and leadership. She also emphasized the importance of community involvement in education, and said that to bring about positive change, strong partnerships must be forged among schools, communities, and families.

Hyacinth Evans (University of the West Indies) said that, unlike many countries,

Jamaica does not have any major barriers to girls' educational access. Girls have always participated in education and typically outperform boys academically. However, girls and boys face other obstacles and discrimination within the school. There are gender biases in the curriculum and in teacher attitudes and practices. For example, girls are not encouraged to take up technical courses that are directly linked to jobs, and as a result are excluded from employment opportunities. Thus, instead of challenging gender stereotypes in curriculum choices, schools reinforce the sex segregation found in the Jamaican labor market.

Evans described some of the unfriendly classroom conditions in Jamaican schools. Students are routinely subject to corporal punishment and verbal abuse by their teachers. Corporal punishment is usually administered unfairly, with boys receiving harsher and more frequent penalties. Teachers commonly use insults and put-downs to correct student behavior, make negative comments about girls' appearance or mode of dress, and compare boys to criminals. These practices negatively affect students' self-esteem. Reports from teachers and administrators suggest that girls have low self-worth, poor body image, and lack a sense of empowerment. In secondary schools, girls are seen as sexual objects and boys' masculinity is constructed around the sexual conquest of female students. In this environment, Evans said, "girls come out losers."

To create fair and girl-friendly school environments, Evans suggested that teachers and administrators participate in gender-sensitivity training. Educational leaders should be trained to avoid gender stereotyping and negative gender evaluations. Gender relations must also be part of the school curriculum and teachers should develop a code of conduct for gender interactions.

Claire Spence (USAID/Jamaica) discussed another aspect of the situation of girls in Jamaica—the high rates of adolescent motherhood. Spence argued that girls are often marginalized and denied equal educational opportunities because of their roles as child-bearers. If female students become pregnant, they face multiple obstacles in returning to school and completing their education. Girls must overcome sociocultural, policy, and legislative barriers to education. Spence refers to these obstacles as a "triple jeopardy" that leads to a cycle of poverty for women, families, and communities. Girls face a "jeopardy of culture" that encourages male promiscuity but condemns female sexual activity as "loose" or immoral. Spence argues, "the adolescent girl must negotiate her way in a culture that demands that she fulfill contradictory roles of the 'decent girl' and the 'loose woman.'"

Guinea will conduct an evaluation of its programs, beginning by compiling good baseline data that is disaggregated by gender.
—Pierre Kamano

Adolescent mothers face a "jeopardy of weak policy" that excludes them from

Suzanne Grant Lewis

education and does not impose sanctions on schools that refuse to admit them. Ministry of Education policy states that schools must allow adolescent mothers to continue their education. However, educational leaders do not admit young mothers to school and do not suffer any consequences for refusing to implement official policy.

Another injustice that school girls face is a "jeopardy of unenforced legislation." Although Jamaica's legislation designates 16 as the age of sexual consent, studies show that a large percentage of girls experience their first sexual encounter at a much younger age. Over 80 percent of the men who impregnate adolescent girls are adults and are subject to prosecution under Jamaican law. However, the legislation is not enforced and girls are not protected from sexual abuse or early pregnancy.

Spence works with the Women's Center of Jamaica Foundation (WCJF) to assist adolescent mothers in reintegrating into school, finding employment, and building self-esteem and a sense of purpose. While the WCJF Program for Adolescent Mothers has experienced great success, it is unable to reach all young mothers and cannot bring about national change on its own. Spence suggested that the Ministry of Education and the Jamaican government work toward eliminating such triple-jeopardy obstacles to girls' education.

Anne Gahongayire (FAWE/Rwanda) asserted that girl-friendly school initiatives do not increase the potential for local community resistance. She believes that little has been done to improve hostile learning environments for girls because of ignorance and lack of convincing data and information. If properly informed, communities would be open to discussing change and implementing gender sensitization programs. Lack of local data and analysis about gender issues is what prevents change from occurring. Thus, it is not local resistance or lack of will that hinders the improvement of learning environments for girls; rather, it is lack of resources and information. Gahongayire argues, "Communities want their girls in school. They just need support."

Ghana will help fight child labor by strengthening school-community partnerships to make schools more attractive and better choices, especially for the girl-child.

—Emmanuel Acquaye

Following the panel presentation, participants asked the panelists about their pro-

FAWE/*Zambia will provide improved information at the community level for informed decisionmaking and will lobby the media to heighten awareness of and support for girls' education.*
—Daphne Chimuka

grams. One participant asked whether the Community Schools of Egypt project could be mainstreamed into the national school system. Another asked to what degree communities are really involved with the community schools. Zaalouk explained that the ideas and concepts of the community schools have been diffused throughout the country, and she estimated that the innovative educational approaches have reached approximately three thousand to five thousand schools. She also said that community committees are directly managing the schools and play an active role in daily decisionmaking.

Audience members also asked several questions about girls' education in Jamaica. They asked whether sex education and HIV awareness are incorporated into the Jamaican curriculum and if educators are teaching boys about teenage pregnancy and young fatherhood. Evans and Spence explained that the Ministries of Health and Education have teamed up to educate students about HIV and that sex education is part of the Jamaican curriculum, but most people are uncomfortable with the topic. They also said that Jamaica has launched a program that addresses the needs of teenage fathers, providing boys with the skills they need to be responsible caretakers.

Maekelech Gidey and Elizabeth Mwinkaar

In one of the breakout discussions, participants focused on the themes of increasing community involvement, reforming teacher training, improving the quality of learning environments for girls, creating a gender-balanced staff, and addressing the special needs of girl students. Participants felt that teacher training could be improved by training teachers in gender equity and by introducing them to more innovative, student-centered teaching methods. One participant stressed the importance of involving the community in education by creating parent-teacher associations and including parents in the school decisionmaking. Some individuals suggested that the quality of girls' learning environments could be improved through the elimination of stereotypes and gender biases in teaching practices, textbooks, and curriculum. Participants also recommended that schools provide child-care facilities, that they teach strategies for preventing sexual

harassment and sexual diseases, and that there be systems in place to ensure the safety of girls traveling to and from school. The group also expressed the hope that the gender composition of teachers, administrators, and management become more balanced so that girls' interests are adequately represented.

Jo Lesser leads a breakout group discussion

Themes from another breakout session included community participation, information sharing, and improvements in pedagogy and teacher education. The group felt that communities should be fully involved, sensitized, and committed to girls' education. One participant emphasized the importance of using the media to launch public awareness campaigns for the promotion of girl-friendly schools. Another participant felt that there should be more information sharing between countries by creating Internet sites and clearinghouses that provide information on girls' education. The group also advocated the development of gender sensitive pedagogy and the inclusion of gender awareness in teacher accreditation standards.

The third small group discussion raised issues about policy formation, community involvement, and the quality of education. Khadija Ramram (Save the Children), asserted that communities must engage in dialogue about educational concerns and that their input should be the foundation for new policies. The group agreed that communities must be involved, but one participant felt that there should be more of a focus on the *process* of developing new policies. She argued, "The issue is the construction of policy. How are people involved? We say we want to ask communities, but we seldom ask the students—much less the girls—who are most affected." Heidi Ross (Colgate University) added that communities must learn to act as researchers and that policy construction must be a group process. Participants also discussed whether communities understand educational quality issues, some arguing that community members do not fully understand the issue, while others countering that they do understand practical quality issues. Carmen Madrinan (Catholic Relief Services/India) pointed out that children engage in child labor because the quality of schools is so low. She explained, "If schools were of high quality and relevant, parents would send their children to schools." At the end of the session, the group generated the policy recommendations that governments should support the community-based

FAWE/Uganda will work with ministers and parliamentarians to develop a policy on teenage mothers. —Ruth Kavuma

school design, take the lead in reducing gender biases in curricula and materials, and explore new and more effective data collection methodologies.

The fourth group discussed how traditional exam systems hinder educational innovation and how community involvement is critical to the educational improvement process. Participants felt that if educators are serious about adopting innovative practices, there must be a complete and simultaneous overhaul of rigid, traditional evaluation systems. Christopher Wheeler (Michigan State University) stressed the importance of implementing innovative teaching methods, arguing, "There is a glorification of traditional teaching methods, but it is all just chalk-and-talk and rote memorization. There must be a student-centered methodology." Participants echoed the analysis of other discussion groups by emphasizing that change must be a bottom-up process where communities are mobilized to take responsibility for the education system. The group ended by recommending that girl-friendly schools be created through gender-balanced teaching staffs, sensitivity training, and revision of textbooks.

Morocco will focus on policymakers and decisionmakers (especially politicians) to enact specific, girl-friendly educational laws and policies. —Najat Yamouri

6. Partners, Adversaries, or Watchdogs: Defining the Relationship Between Governments and NGOs in Implementing Girls' Education Programs

NGOs are increasingly directly delivering social services, including basic and girls' education, and have established themselves as a complementary sector to government and business. With their unique ability to build and maintain partnerships with communities and to offer appropriate, targeted local-level programs, NGOs provide services that are often not delivered by government or the private sector. NGOs' ability to deliver more flexible and small-scale services has allowed them to create for themselves a new niche in development assistance. As their advantages have become more apparent, NGOs have become more involved in development activities, and are receiving ever-growing percentages of donor funding.

This panel discussion attempted to define the path to successful relationships between governments and NGOs in providing education services for girls and women. These relationships depend on a number of factors that influence the effectiveness of programs, such as the nature of the specific problems to be addressed, the types of actions needed, and the capacities and resources of actors both within and outside of government. In addition, these relationships operate in the larger context of culture and nation. Finally, the quality and effectiveness of services are shaped by the technical capacities of the actors involved and by the very nature of governments and NGOs (objectives, structure, sources of funding). In fact, this panel made it clear that there is no single ideal relationship between governments and NGOs. Partnerships, however, ideally are formed when there is a clear benefit to doing so, that is, when the partnership creates efficient service-delivery mechanisms for communities.

Catholic Relief Services/USA will share research and concepts with other organizations and work to create more "affirmative" partnerships with NGOs.
—Jennifer Smith Nazaire

Jane Benbow (CARE) opened the discussion with an overview of three discourses (education for economic development, education for empowerment, education as a basic need) that have influenced education policy in the developing world and the relationship of governments and NGOs in the provision of education services. These discourses influence the nature of educational aid to developing countries, as well as shape the relationships between governments and NGOs and their delivery of education services to girls and women. Benbow put the development of these relationships into context and supported the point that no one relationship is better at producing the desired result of an increased number of girls in school.

According to Benbow, the 1990 Jomtien Education for All Conference marked the beginning of NGO involvement in education service delivery. NGOs were influenced by the new discourse of *education as a basic need*. The underlying logic of discourse was that if education were a basic need and governments could not provide it by themselves, then it would be incumbent upon the international community and local NGOs to help. Benbow argued that this discourse facilitated a partnership between governments and NGOs, with NGOs becoming increasingly involved in complementing governments in the provision of services to communities. Although there were questions about whether NGOs or governments should be playing these roles, "it was not a question of whether NGOs should be playing the role of watchdog or advocates; it was more about what the nature of the partnerships would be."

Mali will conduct a similar symposium on girls' education and work to implement the country's ten-year education action plan.
—Fanta Mady Kéita

Benbow proposed a fourth—as yet unrealized—discourse of education in international development: *education as a human right*. Benbow noted that "if it were to become successful and if NGOs were asked to play a role in it, there would be tremendous consequences...for girls' and women's education." She concluded that if NGOs—as actors in civil society—embrace this new discourse, they will have multiple and complex roles, as innovators, facilitators, bridge-builders and counterweights, providing challenges and channels for accountability and communication, and supporting poor people to organize and fight for their rights.

According to Benbow, the primary determinant as to which role NGOs will play will be the health and strength of the state (or its democratic nature), although that alone will not be a sufficient guide. "Even healthy states from time to time need watchdogs and adversaries to keep them healthy; even weak states need partners in their efforts for change. If there is no strong and healthy democratic state, a system or function that will protect human rights cannot exist." In order for the discourse of education as a right to flourish, it will need to be grounded in research that examines its influence on girls' and women's education, as well as the long-term relationship between governments and NGOs in ensuring and protecting that right.

Jennifer Spratt (Research Triangle Institute) provided an overview of various types of NGOs and their relationships to different types of governments in the provision and support of girls' education. Spratt emphasized that it is difficult to say which is more important or effective in the delivery of education for girls. "Every given context must be assessed with relation to what the specific needs are as well as the relative strengths and weaknesses of all potential actors—government, nongovernment, national government, local government, and civil society—that could be

Cecilia Torres-Llosa, Malak Zaalouk, and Hoda el-Saady

mobilized to support actions in support of girls' education." The role of all actors in supporting girls' education needs to be closely examined on a case by case basis, she said. "When we are looking to develop relationships between governments and NGOs, we need to try to develop several different kinds of relationships. There are those that foster the constructive tension of a watchdog role, ensuring that society continues developing, and sometimes those that serve a complementary role to governments."

Spratt concluded that since issues involving girls' education are complex, solutions will probably also be complex. "Ideally, we should work toward forming and encouraging partnerships between both actors. The quality and skills of individual NGOs and governments vary greatly, and all are not equally capable of participating in programs. Those NGOs that possess the suitable skills and experience (such as ties to local communities, technical expertise, and participatory development skills) can play a number of important roles both during the design and implementation of the social program and in the preparation, implementation and evaluations of future policies."

Brian Spicer (Academy for Educational Development) explored the issue through a case study based on his experience in Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province. Spicer said that to understand the path to a successful relationship between governments and NGOs, we must consider the relationship most likely to support the objectives being sought as well as the real capacity of both governments and NGOs. NGOs can play different roles in the delivery of education services at different times, Spicer noted. "Often, NGOs act as subcontractors to governments for the provision of services. In these cases there is often no real partnership developing." In effect, governments hold NGOs accountable for their role in the process of delivering basic educationl. Spicer warned that NGOs should not take over government responsibilities but enhance government's capacity to carry out its responsibilities. Thus, both must be more open to forming partnerships and working toward common goals.

The Ethiopian Women Lawyer's Association will increase the number of its partnerships, including with FAWE. *—Almaz Woldeyes Yimaer*

According to Spicer, it is important to consider how the outcomes of the govern-

USAID/Peru will work with its partners to ensure that the national education plan currently under development incorporates gender issues; participate in the second national conference on "quality education as the role of community in education"; and continue to play a leadership role in the country's education-for-all plan. —Kristin Langlykke

ment-NGO relationship are measured. "Some studies focus on the product without looking at the problems of the relationship. However, often the product is far better than the process." The relationship between the two actors is rarely "one" relationship, and it will be defined depending on the predisposition of the observer. All actors, donors, NGOs, and governments will hold different views and experiences depending on their perspectives. "We must be aware of our own perspectives when trying to define the relationship between governments and NGOs."

Howard Williams (Academy for Educational Development) argued that the distinguishing features and comparative advantages of governments and NGOs and their relationship are best understood in light of the political systems and contexts in which they operate. Governments must provide services, although the extent to which they will be capable of doing so will vary. NGOs, on the other hand, have established themselves as a complementary sector to government and business in the provision of social services, including girls' education. "Although it is easier on paper to provide an overview of specific categories in which each group has an advantage, this is complicated in real life scenarios by contextual dimensions, including political stability, human rights, war, and natural disasters," he said. Where political instability threatens governments' performance or innovation, NGOs' importance to individuals, groups, and communities increases. NGOs' relationship to governments in this context may be more supplemental than complementary, and will more likely include a "watchdog" function for reporting on and responding to areas of system breakdown." Williams concluded that there is a need to improve the contextual dimensions and organizational typologies for examining these relationships and their respective short and long-term advantages for the provision of education services.

Karen Tietjen

The breakout discussions allowed participants to identify and discuss implications for policy and practice. Participants agreed that to define the relationship between governments and NGOs, it is first of all necessary to define what an NGO is. Because the designation refers to a wide range of organizations, a common language and understanding is needed of the different types of NGOs, their strengths and weakness, and their suitability for different roles in a partnership. Donors also play a role in creating and nurturing relationships between governments and NGOs, and this role must also be considered in any dialogue about the relationship between governments and NGOs. "We need to look at the relationship between governments, NGOs, and donors as tripartite," said one participant. By clearly defining the roles of the different actors and their specific contexts, more effective partnerships can be created.

FAWE/Guinea will report in Guinea on the symposium and strengthen partnerships with the media to make girls' education more newsworthy.
—Madeleine Macka Kaba

A participant from Mali recommended that donors pay attention to the context in which services are delivered and be sensitive to the most strategic ways of accomplishing their measurable goals. Donors were complimented for working with NGOs at the community level in order to familiarize themselves with the context of programs, and they were advised to work just as hard to help NGOs strengthen their partnerships with education ministries.

The need to consider further the role of donors in the relationship between governments and NGOs became even more apparent as participants discussed examples of policies that had been implemented without grassroots support. A participant from FAWE/Senegal discussed a basic education program in Mali that provided instruction in the local language. The experience revealed that parents were against use of the language, preferring that their children instead be taught in French, the country's official language. Parents believed French would allow their children to advance in life and at the same time serve to justify their investments in education. Cecilia Torres-Llosa (*Instituto Apoyo*/Peru) added that governments sometimes lack the strength, capacity, or will to push forward their own national agendas as well as those of civil society. She suggested that "since donors are the stronger player in this relationship, they should assist governments to accomplish their goals by building their capacity to do so. This can only happen if donors play a coordinating role to manage the relationship between governments and NGOs, and if they are sensitive to the needs of communities."

In addition, participants insisted that donors must understand the needs and limitations of the governments and NGOs they work with. Governments should manage the reforms and direct the policy, but they should not necessarily be the

Frank Method, Hyacinth Evans, Jane Benbow, and Steve Klees

implementers as well. A participant from Honduras stated that "civil society is in a better position to develop good ideas for communities." Spratt wondered whether governments have the necessary capacity, knowledge, will, and resources to implement a policy. If not, she said, countries should find ways to send clearer messages to donors about their needs.

Participants agreed that NGOs need to be more open and transparent, which includes making information available regarding who board members are, where funding comes from, and how money is spent. Such transparency will assist NGOs to relate to governments in a more accountable fashion as well as communicate to donors their specific needs. A participant suggested that "it is easy for NGOs to be drawn into inappropriate roles, and they must learn to recognize their capabilities and remember that they have the role of short-term facilitators." Lawrence Chickering (Educate Girls Globally) said that "one of the things we ought to be doing is strengthening the capacity of local NGOs to implement a strategy or a government policy." For this to happen, Chickering said that NGOs must be able to be held accountable for the decisions they make in the delivery of services. Spratt asked whether there is a role for international NGOs in strengthening the relationship and dialogue between local NGOs and governments. "This would assist both parties to discuss and negotiate policies as well as strategies for effective implementation," she said.

Participants also advocated for legislation that would define the parameters of government-NGO relationships. This would facilitate the forming of partnerships between actors by basing them on a set of accepted criteria, with an emphasis on the building of trust. Furthermore, the implementation of mechanisms that improve collaboration between governments and NGOs can help ensure the provision of more (and better) services within current resource constraints. An alternative to the legislative approach would be to create an office within the government that is specifically devoted to dealing with NGOs. This office could negotiate roles and responsibilities of partners involved in policy formulation and service delivery.

The breakout sessions concluded with general agreement that NGOs are not the sole answer for the delivery of education for girls or women and that the relationship between NGOs and governments varies according to context. What is most important, however, is that program designers and donors take the time to consider the relative strengths of, and relationships among, key potential actors who may be mobilized to take on support actions.

Closing plenary

Emily Vargas-Barón (USAID) began the closing plenary by briefly summarizing her experience at the April 2000 Dakar World Education Forum, where she represented USAID, as "a moment of revitalization and hope." She presented a model that the delegates at the forum had debated, which calls for renewed emphasis on quality, systemic change, and the need to focus on the child as an active learner.

Emily Vargas-Barón

Vargas-Barón also presented the Education for All goals:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, with special emphasis on girls and children in difficult circumstances, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning, life skills, and citizenship programs.
4. Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence to all, so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills.

Next steps, said Vargas-Barón, include countries preparing comprehensive national education-for-all action plans by 2002 and creation of a high-level network. This network will serve to refocus educational programs and generate concrete financial commitments by national governments, donors, NGOs, and other organizations to achieving their education-for-all goals.

Conference highlights

May Rihani (Academy for Educational Development) began by remarking that the Symposium had been an enriching experience. Rihani said that participants and presenters had accomplished much as well as set many new challenges. She

then summarized the key concepts that arose in the plenary, panel, and breakout sessions.

First, she said, a girl-friendly approach to education is a child-friendly approach. Several of the arguments put forward suggested that an educational system that is reformed and transformed to be gender sensitive benefits boys and girls, while an educational system that does not respond to specific girls' educational needs tends to benefit boys more than girls.

Second, to address the specific needs of girls, the poor, children living in remote areas, and other underserved populations, the conventional approaches to basic education activities must change. Education for all will only be accomplished through innovative approaches that reconstruct educational systems to make them fully child-centered, interactive, and exploratory.

Third, the evidence presented at the symposium does not confirm the conventional wisdom that access alone does not yield benefits. Rather, access alone, regardless of quality, still yields social returns. Quality, however, will further increase social and private returns. Hence, there is still a critical need to improve quality. Quality improvement has to build incrementally, and must be compatible with the conditions and context of the particular country or community.

May Rihani and Mary Joy Pigozzi

Finally, Rihani said that partnerships were not just an important element of successful girls' and basic education, but ***a condition of*** success. In addition, the aims articulated at the symposium could only be achieved by the actions of a critical mass of players and stakeholders representing different sectors. Rihani concluded by acknowledging the value of expanding the framework to include women's education and other related issues. However, she said, "It is clear that we need to continue emphasizing school-age girls in our efforts to make a meaningful difference as well as to achieve our goal of education for all."

Next steps

Mary Joy Pigozzi (UNICEF) said that many successes in girls' education had been shared in this symposium and noted, as had Vargas-Barón, that the Dakar conference had put girls' education "at the top of the agenda." While a visible difference has been made in improving girls' education, the slow progress has not been sufficient, Pigozzi said. "The responsibility is on everyone to embark on a collective journey." Specifically, Pigozzi recommended moving from advocacy to action; scaling up pilot projects to national scale; carefully measuring and reporting on success;

and transforming education systems to be gender-sensitive and child-friendly. Pigozzi wondered whether this symposium had been the first step on such a collective journey.

Closing remarks

Susie Clay

In her closing remarks, Susie Clay (USAID) said that the symposium had been a rare opportunity for senior policy-shapers from thirty-four countries to consult on a topic of major importance. Declaring that since she believed there was nothing more important for the future of the planet than the education of all boys and girls, she found it "most disturbing that for parents in countries such as Pakistan or Bolivia or Yemen or Mali or Bangladesh, the thought of their children completing even six years of primary education might be an unattainable dream." The world's leaders had committed to the goal of education for all, but had not made the required resource commitments to achieve it. Nor, Clay said, was it yet clear that the estimated $8 billion a year needed to achieve universal primary education is now forthcoming.

"We have learned that we have the commitment, knowledge, and tools required to achieve the goals of universal primary education. What remains to be attained, however, are the resources and the actions." Clay urged participants to "take home the message...and influence governments, businesses, foundations, associations, religious organizations, media organizations, universities, communities, parents, and individuals to honor their commitments by providing the required resources to educate their children."

Clay said, "If we have learned anything over the two days we should have learned that what is good for girls is good for all children," and that "a girl-friendly approach is a child-friendly approach." She added that there is abundant evidence to show that an educational system that is responsive to specific girls' needs benefits both girls and boys.

In addition to calling for increased resources for education, Clay said there was a need to gather more evidence on effective policy and practice for girls' education. "I think we need to challenge ourselves to continually back up our perspectives with evidence," citing Congressman Earl Pomeroy's assertion in his address to the symposium that "good, hard data are what legislators need to advocate for girls' education."

Clay also spoke about the effects of the HIV/AIDS crisis, which she said is taking an especially hard toll on girls and women.

In ending her remarks, Clay exhorted participants to "act as if every child in the world is our own child and work to ensure that every girl and boy succeeds in obtaining, at the minimum, a quality primary education."

Remarks of USAID Administrator J. Brady Anderson

It is a pleasure to be here and to see so many development professionals gathered to discuss what I personally believe to be one of the most important issues in development: girls' education. Throughout history, men and women have hungered for education. Every great civilization on earth has revered knowledge and learning. Today, the need for a good education is understood and accepted all over the world. In this new era of globalization, literacy and math cannot be overemphasized, because these skills are the very foundations of our children's future success.

In development, education plays a particularly important role. As my old friend, the late President Julius Nyerere, once said, "Education is not a way to escape poverty, but a way of fighting it." We know that girls' education, in particular, is perhaps the single most important investment a developing country can make. We know that mothers who have at least six years of primary education are more likely to educate their children. That they are more likely to have healthier children, and have them later in life. We know that educated women make better workers and that they are more likely to participate in their government. And of course we know that they are more likely to earn higher wages.

We know this is true because in places like the state of Kerala, in the south of India, literacy is almost universal. And in Kerala the infant mortality rate is the lowest in the entire developing world—and the fertility rate is the lowest in India. Here in America, we know that the median incomes of women who have not completed high school are nearly 40 percent lower than those who have—and that they are three times as likely to receive public assistance.

All over the world, study after study shows that investing in girls' education helps turn the vicious cycle of illiteracy, poverty, and high child mortality into what Treasury Secretary Larry Summers has called a virtuous cycle of education, economic progress, and health. As we enter the twenty-first century, nearly a billion people—one-sixth of humanity—cannot read a book or sign their names. Two-thirds of these people are women. Today there are over 130 million school-age children worldwide who are not in school—73 million of them are girls. The challenge facing all of us here today is how to get the virtuous cycle started.

At USAID, we believe every sector of society has a role to play in making quality education available to every girl and boy. Governments have a particularly important role to play—indeed, theirs is the primary role—because they provide not only the financing but the policies that can make girls education a priority.

Girls' education must take place in the context of equality before the law: we must send the message to women and girls everywhere that they are as valued in society as their brothers, fathers, and husbands. Twenty-eight years ago, for instance, the United States passed landmark legislation, known as Title 9, which helped guarantee equal access to education. Today, American women make up a majority of the nation's college students—and a majority of those receiving master's degrees. And, although we still have a long way to go in achieving income parity, studies have shown that the

income gap between men and women in the United States narrows with increased levels of education.

One of the most encouraging signs I have seen in recent years is that leaders around the world are realizing the importance of equal access to education—and they are taking action. Last year, for example, Peru's Minister of Education, Dr. Felipe Garcia, announced that Peru's education budget would be increased and policies would be adopted to "ensure access to education for all_children." Also last year, Guinea celebrated its first National Girls' Education Day on June 21, with well-known community leaders broadcasting the importance of girls' education over national radio and TV. This is the kind of commitment and dedication we need if we are to realize our goal of a quality education for every child.

I have already mentioned that governments must pass laws and policies that recognize women's rights. What else can they do? They can also address the barriers that keep girls from going to school. For instance, providing rural villages with water and electricity increases the chances of girls receiving an education. In some cultures, establishing separate schools for boys and girls, or having women teachers teach girls classes, does the same.

Let me emphasize here, though, that the role of government, while critical, is by no means the only role—the private sector can make important contributions as well. One of my favorite stories in this regard comes from Morocco. As a result of the 1998 International Conference on Girls' Education, sponsored by USAID and other donors, the Wafabank and the government of Morocco are implementing an education campaign called One Bank-One School. Under One Bank-One School, commercial banks sponsor local schools. Officials from the bank get together with leaders from the community and essentially say "what do you need? How can we work together?" Sometimes the answer is "We need more schools, or more books." But sometimes it's "better sanitation," or "better roads," or "shoes for our children, so they can walk to school." And these banks are working with the communities so they can meet these needs together.

Six hundred banks have committed to this program, to improve the education of children in six hundred schools all over Morocco. And, I am happy to say, girls will benefit from this collaboration just as much as boys. The private sector has a particular interest in improving girls' education: by improving access to school, they are training the workers of tomorrow, and widening the labor pool. In a world that runs on brainpower, the relationship between a company's bottom line and the education of its employees—women as well as men—is pretty obvious.

The media also have a role to play in fostering awareness of girls' education. Radio, television, movies, newspapers—all of these media convey messages as to what is important in a society. And so whether it is a character in a soap opera or a radio talk show host, we all need to say the same thing to our girls: both you and your education are important to us. USAID has worked to promote girls' education in Guatemala for a decade. Today, the Guatemalan Association for Girls' Education—on its own—is launching a national media campaign to not only focus attention on

the importance of girls' education, but to get government officials, business leaders, and the community at large involved.

There has been progress. In developing countries, the primary school enrollment for girls has increased by 50 percent since 1960. In the poorest countries, it has more than doubled over the same period. Still, 60 percent of the girls that should be in school are not. It is clear that we need to do better, not just to improve the quantity of education, but also the quality. It does no one any good to have girls—or boys, for that matter—sit in classes that are overcrowded, or where the education they receive has no relevance to their daily lives. The goal of education, and girls' education in particular, is to allow women to take an even more active role in society—and to give them even more of a stake in their future.

B.F. Skinner once said that "Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten." I think I know what he meant. Because as valuable as the ability to read, write, and do basic math is, the real gift of an education is that it broadens our minds, and gives us a sense of the world we live in, and all the opportunities in it. When I was the US ambassador to Tanzania, I met many Americans who had come to climb the great Mt. Kilimanjaro, or to see the wildlife that prowled the Serengeti. Most Tanzanians have never climbed Mt. "Kili"—they used to tell me that only tourists and adult male guides were able to scale Africa's highest peak. They used to say, "This is not something we Tanzanian girls can do." And then one day a Peace Corps volunteer, who was teaching in a girls' school at the foot of the mountain, challenged his students to climb Kilimanjaro. Well, the girls laughed at him at first. But then he and some USAID staff were able to find some jackets and shoes for the girls, and they began teaching the girls about the mountain and its flora and fauna. They became interested, and started to train for the climb. On the appointed day, these girls all set out wearing socks on their hands, carrying cabbages and bananas to eat along the way. I know you won't be surprised to learn that they made it to the top—amidst many tears and a lot of laughter. These girls overcame so much and did what only a few people in the world had done before them. The memory of that will stay with them for a lifetime, and will inspire them to excel in other arenas.

As educators and as development professionals, this should be our goal: to not only give girls the ability to read about new worlds, but the ability to look at their own world with new eyes.

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Funded under the G/WID WIDTech Activity
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